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SATURDAY, OCT. 29, 1870.

Subject: Future Punishment.

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A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

"And those shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."—MATT. xxv., 46.

Last Sunday morning I spoke to you of *Heaven*, showing the method of instruction which the sacred Scriptures adopt respecting the future spirit-world. Far less agreeable, but scarcely less important, is the teaching of HolyScripture in respect to *the future punishment of the finally wicked*.

The two grand truths—victorious virtue crowned with happiness, and wickedness overthrown, sad and suffering,—go through the New Testament as light and shadow wait on each other through physical nature.

The same method of representation is followed in depicting the future punishment of the wicked as in painting the joy of the righteous. A scientific accuracy is impossible. Our present life has not the terms or the experience which will interpret to us in the body the truths which are supersensuous, ethereal, and which imply development into a condition for which this state of being has only analogies, but no actual experience. All instruction in reference to the other state is therefore proximate and representative, and of necessity employs, not the scientific reason, but imagination and the reason under it. For the imagination is not merely a decorative fancy. It is the fundamental element and quality which constitutes faith. It is that faculty by which the soul is able to discern clearly invisible truth in distinction from material and sensuous truth. It is of prime importance in education. And no book of instruction in the world ever made larger use of imagination as the channel through which to give instruction than the Bible.

Intelligent commentators and preachers, recognizing the majestic beauty of the pictures of heaven, have long, and with almost unbroken consent, taught that these were not to be taken literally: they were addressed to the imagination, and designed to kindle hope, joy, and courage. And in the parallel of the suffering state hereafter, the same method of teaching exists. All the experiences which men have had

of trouble, all the things which have in them the power of inflicting suffering, are marshalled to create in the soul a powerful conception of penalty. And *penalty* is the thing, and not the special method which these figures shadow out. Fire and brimstone, darkness or lurid light, the sword, scorpions, gnawing worms, storms, thunder and lightning, and, from the personal experience of men, fear, overthrow, despotic captivity, torments of thought and feeling—these, as it were, are simply the pigments which are employed to render a picture of the solemn fact that as sin and penalty are joined together in this life, so they are in the life to come; and that this conjunction of virtue with pleasure and sin with pain is part of a universal and everlasting constitution; and not peculiar to this life.

These figures are not, then, designed to be taken as literal facts. The taking them as such has worked immense mischief, and will work more. Yet they point to the invisible spiritual truths which will be to our soul hereafter what these pictures now are to our imagination. There will not be fire; and yet, there will be a quick sense of suffering of which the effect of fire is a fit suggestion. There will not be literal scorpions and gnawing worms; but thousands of men already know that there are feelings of remorse that gnaw the soul worse than ever worm gnawed the body. And these are but emblems of great spiritual truth; but the truths are spiritual, and not carnal nor sensuous.

1. There is not another teaching of the Bible that comes home to us as does this truth of punishment in the future life. On this subject men cannot keep down the heart while they are coolly weighing the evidence. Because, in the first place, it strikes the very soul of soul in each one. It strikes through uncultured fear. Or, if men be cultivated, and accept this truth, then all that which they gain by refinement, all the sense of personal worth, all the value of character, all estimate of magnitude in one's own being, is put at peril. And the sense of loss is more to those that are refined and cultured than to the ignorant can be the sense of fear. But it comes home to our affections, also. My brethren, it is one thing to read in the Bible the chapter as I read it in your hearing this morning, and other such passages, and another thing to ponder them in the face of a dead child. It may not be difficult for a theologian to sit in his chair and reason abstractly, rebutting and counter-thrusting in argument; but when he is called to follow his own son who, through a doubtful or an openly ignominious career, has gone out of life, it is not in human nature any longer to reason in the same calm mood. To apply this truth in the intensity of agonized love following its lost companion, like another Orpheus seeking Eurydice—these are things that bring this question home as almost no other ever is broughthome to us

It touches our benevolence, also, as applied to the vast mass of mankind, who certainly do not live according to the very lowest standard set up by the laxest moralist. If to be born again, if to begin to love, if to hate selfishness, if to begin a separation from our animal nature, are the conditions of joy in the future life, then how few of all the existing people on the globe have met those conditions! And yet, I will defy any man to look with a sympathetic heart out upon the masses that are moving more than all the leaves of the forests of the continent, and let the conviction pass his mind as even the shadow of a shade, without being utterly overwhelmed. A man can not have the susceptibility which is cultivated by the gospel of Christ, and then look boldly in the face the terrific application of this simple truth to the outlying masses of mankind, and not shiver and tremble with sensibility.

2. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that the educated Christian mind of all lands, for the last hundred years, has been changing, and that milder expressions and a very different spirit have prevailed. It is certainly true that theories have been changing from gross material representations more and more in the direction of moral representations. It is very true that this subject is not preached as it used to be—not as it was in my childhood. It has not been preached as often, nor with the same fiery and familiar boldness that it used to be. Multitudes of men who give every evidence of being spiritual, regenerate, and devout, and laborious and self-denying, find themselves straightened in their minds in respect to this question, and are turning anxiously every whither to see whence relief may come to them. There has been a profound change in the sentiment of christendom in regard to those gross representations of future punishment, which were handed down to us from the past.

The reasons are not far to find. The mediæval literalization of the Bible figures, and the carrying of them forward with collateral and original illustrations of the same kind, had nearly reduced the truth of the future not only to a sensuous, but to a brutal and infernal condition. The representations that were accustomed to be made several hundred years ago, and that in the Roman Church are still made, and occasionally in Protestant Churches, were such that it seems to me no man could maintain self-respect, or, if he did, that no man could maintain his reason, and really believe them, or consciously use them. They are simply calculated to inspire horror and disgust.

The monkish descriptions of hell may be well learned from Christian art. For there have been periods of history when we could have learned theological ideas better from Religious Art than from books. If you will take Michael Angelo's picture of the *Last Judgment*, you will

better understand what was the real feeling of the age in which he lived on the subject of reward and punishment, than by reading any amount of theological treatises. Let any one look at that; let any one see the enormous, gigantic coils of fiends and men; let any one look at that defiant Christ that stands like a superb athlete at the front, hurling his enemies from him, and calling his friends toward him, as Hercules might have done; let any one look upon that hideous, wriggling mass that goes plunging down through the air—serpents and men and beasts of every nauseous kind, mixed together; let him look at the lower parts of the picture, where with pitchforks men are by devils being cast into caldrons and into burning fires, where hateful fiends are gnawing the skulls of suffering sinners, and where there is hellish cannibalism going on—let a man look at that picture, and the scenes which it depicts, and he sees what were the ideas which men once had of hell and of divine justice. It was a nightmare as hideous as ever was begotten by the hellish brood itself; and it was an atrocious slander on God. It was an outrage against the government of God in the universe. It was an outrage on every man's susceptibilities that had not been poisoned already by the atmosphere in which it was generated.

If you suppose that this habit of brutal representation of the material sufferings of the other life is dead, then look at the representation of the *Last Judgment* by Cornelius, a Roman Catholic artist of the German modern school. It is only necessary to say that, having lived in a later and more enlightened age, he has succeeded in making a picture more hideous than that of Michael Angelo. As a study of anatomy, as a mere piece of poetry, the sufferings which Michael Angelo depicts, may display the skill of the painter, and may have an interest to those men who love tragic things; but as representations, Dante's Inferno, Michael Angelo's picture, and the staple representations that are yet made in the Roman Church, are as outrageous as it is possible for the inflamed imagination to produce. I do not wonder that men have reacted from these horrors—I honor them for it.

Again, the impossibility of reconciling, under a just government, a terrific penalty with a universal neglect of mankind, has been, in the way in which many persons are constituted, the origin of their doubts.

I am not now stating my own opinions. I am simply giving the different views which men hold at present, or have held, on this subject.

To allow such a stream of human existence to be fed and renewed in every generation, which was pouring over the precipice at the rate of thirty millions a year, into such torments as the old method of representation presented to us, and at the same time to teach that God was a loving Father—these two things have seemed so difficult to

multitudes of persons, that they have fled from the attempt to reconcile them, and have abandoned all belief in them.

Moreover, Christianity has educated a moral disposition before which the various theories of theology that have sprung into existence within the last two thousand years are now on trial again. And the theologies which could stand the moral tests of the ages in which they were bred, cannot many of them stand the test of the higher developments which have taken place in our age.

For example, vindictive justice was once thought to be perfectly right; but it cannot be defended in the great court of love. Penal suffering, disciplinary and educatory, can; but not vindictive justice. The Fatherhood of God is taking the place of Oriental monarchy. Once it was held that God might do just what He pleased, because He pleased. Now we are taught that God may do what He pleases, because love always pleases to do the best of things. God's moral government is less and less likened to despotic government, and more and more to household government; and it will continue to grow in that direction, with the growth of civilization, based on Christian instruction. The question that arises is not, "What may a supreme monarch do with his subjects?" but, "What must a Father do with His erring children?" And this gives pause to many a man.

Moreover, there has come into existence a new sentiment in respect to the rights of individuals. When kings were *jure divino* owners of all their subjects and their subjects' property, when in them was supposed to reside supreme wisdom and supreme right, then men had no rights that they could urge before the throne; and out of that state of feeling came the interpretation and misinterpretation of the monarchic figures of the Bible. For, when the Bible represents God as a monarch, and the divine government as a monarchy, it never is with a *political meaning*. It is always for an æsthetic purpose. It is, by speaking of the King, to raise in the mind of those to whom one speaks, the idea of grandeur, of beauty, of glory; and it never conceived of that question which rises in our minds when the word *king* is spoken. And so of the whole apparatus monarchical. It was employed according to the law of symbolism, or of emblems, to raise up in the mind a conception of beauty, or joy, or power; but was never intended to determine the question of right or wrong, as between aristocracy and democracy, or between democracy and monarchy.

Now, Christianity itself has developed a democracy that teaches us that man has by the very law of his being personal rights that must be respected. Before he was created he had none; but the very act of creation endowed him with rights; and God crowned him with them. The old mode of representing man as nothing, absolutely nothing,

without a word to say, can never again have the same force or growth that it had before Christianity inspired so much higher an estimate of man and of society.

The *eternity* of punishment, when anything like a conception of its signification and meaning seizes the mind, seems to paralyze many of them with grief. The eternity of future punishment is the point where almost all agonizing doubts and struggles of Christian theologians have arisen. And of what are called the *insoluble mysteries of divine government*, it seems to me that if the doctrine of eternity of punishment were removed, nine out of ten would disappear of themselves. For I believe that they result simply from that one term, *suffering eternity*.

All these reasons, and some others which I cannot pause to enumerate, have conspired to work the change which I say has taken place, and is taking place, on this subject.

3. We must not think that efforts to escape these views of the eternal punishment of the wicked are wanton, or that they indicate a low moral tendency. On the contrary, they are, in many instances, the result of the very highest moral susceptibility. Nor must we suppose that they spring up only in ignorant minds. They arise in the most cultivated minds that there are in the church to-day. Nor are we to believe that they are plead for the sake of getting larger license among self-indulgent and wicked men; for they are plead by men who are models of Christian self-denial and heroism.

It is therefore a matter that demands still further looking into. To what grounds have these pressures brought men, and what are the theories that prevail on this subject to-day?

First is the Sadducean. It is disbelief in any immortality. According to that doctrine, there is no resurrection. This disposes of the question, of course, by one single stroke; and I need not pause to speak of that.

Next, there are those who rid themselves of the unquestionable Scripture truth of the punishment of the wicked, by denying the inspiration of the Bible, and by denying the authority of its teaching on this point. It is somewhat remarkable that what are called the most liberal interpreters of the text, generally concede that a fair construction of the Gospels must result in the teaching of the future punishment of the wicked.

Theodore Parker himself declared, I think—I may be mistaken; but if I recollect right he declared—that the first three gospels left no doubt in his mind that Christ did preach the doctrine of future and eternal punishment; but he considered Christ to be a fallible man, mistaken, having the prejudices of his age, and that his teaching on

this point was not to be accepted or believed. He rid himself of this doctrine, as thousands do, by denying the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. And it is the progress in this direction which is so much feared by good men. When a man has given up this one fact of inspiration, he has given up the whole foundation of revealed religion, and has gone upon the ground of mere natural religion. But, natural religion is an indefinite term. If it includes the moral truths which have been unfolded through the experience of mankind, then it differs but little from revealed religion. If it looks only to physical nature, then it becomes too meagre for life, and dies of inanition or runs headlong into pantheism or atheism.

A third class have taken the ground of what I may call—and I say it not reproachfully, but simply as a name—*old-fashioned Universalism*. This teaches that men suffer in this life for their sins, and are rewarded for their virtues, and that the power of God at death sets men free from whatever remains of sin and impurity there may be, and inspires them with a sovereign spiritual power to go forward hereafter in the true life. This I understand to be the philosophical statement of the old ground of universalism. But these views are not at present in the ascendent, even in what we call Universalist Churches. The dominant tendency now is to admit future punishment as a truth taught, and a tenet to be accepted, but to teach that it is remedial and educatory, and that it will finally bring men to holiness through suffering. This is called sometimes the *Restorationist* view.

Not a little progress has been made, however, in a still different direction from this—in a very widely different view. There are those who seek to escape from the doctrine of future punishment by teaching that immortality is not natural; that it does not belong to all; that it was not born with men; that it is a special gift to those only who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and that all others perish. And by *perish* they mean, literally, *are annihilated*. Some say that they are peremptorily annihilated at death; and other some, that they are consumed after a longer or shorter period of penal suffering. But both agree that annihilation is the portion of wicked men, and that immortality belongs only, and as a special gift, to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And so this class of men escape from believing the dreadful doctrine of future punishment.

There are those who teach that there is a series of spheres, or planes, and that men go forth from this life to that sphere or plane for which their particular development here fits them, and that they progress, in ascending order, under the nutriment of spiritual culture, until all, at

last, will reach their ultimate perfection. This may be called a cross between Swedenborgianism and modern "spiritualism."

Then, a few there are who, having felt the pressure of the great difficulties which are involved, have fallen upon this same doctrine of spheres, or successive opportunities, in an inverse order; but they have sought to escape by teaching a doctrine of *previous existence*. They hold that men are now living a second time; that they have already lived and fallen; and that God has now, and in this world, given them one more chance to recover from their fall in the foregoing existences. This is only a variation of the last doctrine of spheres. One places the renewed chance here, and the other places it hereafter. Both hold to a series of chances or spheres of existence; only one says that this life exhausts the series, and the other says that this life only begins the series. It is the same theory; only you take it at different ends.

Others have thought that while the system of reward and punishment was eternal, each individual under that system did not suffer eternally; that the great moral constitution by which right and wrong were distinguished, and pleasure or pain attached to them respectively, was not peculiar to this life, but that it belonged to the eternal life and the order of things forever. They hold that the great *law* by which sin suffers and righteousness rejoices, *is eternal*; but that men do not individually go into eternal suffering because the system of penalties is eternal.

Without my expressing an opinion with regard to any of these systems, further than I have in explanation of them, you will be struck in view of them, with two things: first with the anguish of heart which has led men to seek some relief from the popular representations of eternal punishment. We cannot meet this anguish of men's hearts on cold exegetical grounds. We may not believe with them, but we cannot denounce them. We may think that they have taken an evasive line of reasoning, or that they have gone off on a fancy, rather than a true line of fact; or we may say that it is contrary to the testimony of Scripture; but when great natures, in the anguish of their souls and with their sympathies enkindled for their fellow-men, have taken one or the other of these grounds, they are to be respected, and not persecuted. The time is coming when men will demand the right to think, to open again these questions of destiny, and to bring to bear upon them all that added light which the later ages of Christianity, and a higher inspiration of the Holy Ghost, will enable them to concentrate. I do not say that they are right or wrong; but this I declare, that if there is any one point on which we are to be tolerant and charitable and forbearing in our constructions of men's beliefs, it is on this. For there is not a place where the thought can dwell, that is

so terrific, and where the heart suffers so profoundly, as on this very point.

Contrast these various theories, however, with the sublime simplicity of Christ's teaching, and you will be struck with the difference between inspired teaching and human philosophizing—for I now state affirmatively what I understand to be the Scripture doctrine and representation. The whole doctrine substantially rests upon Christ's sole teaching. If we had only the Old Testament we could but guess that there was an existence after death, of any kind. The full disclosure belongs to the New Testament; and in the New Testament, while there are, especially now in the light of the Gospels, passages in which the Apostles teach the truth of dreadful coming punishment, yet the foundation, the main ground and confidence and support of this truth is that our Master taught it. The loving, the gentle, the sympathetic, the sacrificial Saviour, who loved sinning men so that he came to die for them—he, calmly, deliberately, over and over again, did teach his disciples in such a way that they at that time, and since then the great body of the church, have believed that he meant us to understand that there was a future state of punishment, and that it was so great and dreadful a thing that all men should with terrible earnestness flee from it.

He announced the fact. He did not reason upon it, nor point out its place in a system of moral truth, nor give it philosophical definition, nor consider objections to it, nor attempt to reconcile it with any theory of divine love or divine power. He raised His hand to the sky to draw aside the curtain, and there, right before his hearers, rose the dark grandeur of future Retribution. He bore witness to it as a fact. He did not discourse upon it as a philosophy. From the beginning of his ministry to the end, he went about saying, "Repent! repent!" And the universal sinfulness of man, while it never had so much sympathy, at the same time never had such fidelity of rebuke as in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. He did not teach that the danger of men's sinfulness was in this life; but, while doubtless recognizing all the incidental penalties that belong to evil-doing under material law, he all the time kept open before the eye the great horizon of the future. There is not one thing more characteristic of Christ's teaching than that constant largeness of sphere in his thought—that looking to the great *Beyond*. It was the cope of the eternal world under which he seemed to be standing. And one reason of the dignity and authority and power with which he taught, and the grasp that he laid on men's consciousness, as well as on their reason and their sensibilities, was that he spoke as One that came down from heaven; and his teachings on the subject of penalty, therefore, were not teachings of the facts

of natural law in this world, but were teachings in respect to the everlasting constitution of God, from eternity to eternity. He taught that it was a danger that men had in the future so great as to demand from every man the putting forth of his whole strength.

He did not teach that symbols were literal and not figures, that hell was a literal kingdom, nor that there was a literal fire there, nor that they who were gathered there were literally tormented as men in dungeons and inquisitorial monarchical prisons were; but this he certainly did mean, and this men understood that he meant—that their sins would bring down upon them penalties here, and penalties hereafter, and that the danger was neither light nor transient. It was vast, it was voluminous, and he measured it by the effort that was required to overcome it. And that was indicated by his words, “Strive (that is, *agonize*) to enter in at the straight gate. Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” It was declared that the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent stormed it—that is the figure. Men are in such peril of losing heaven, and of falling into wreck and ruin, that they must put forth their utmost exertion. That which a beleaguering army does, do ye, and get the gate open; and then charge through and take possession of the fort. “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” It was a real danger. It was an awful danger. It was calculated to stir up fear, quicken imagination, acuminate susceptibility, and to put men everywhere on the alert. This feeling ran all through Christ’s ministry.

The danger also was so great that it was the occasion of His coming from heaven; not less than equal with the Father, He laid aside the glory which He had, that He might rescue the world from death. His advent, His life, His teachings, His sacrifice and His death, He connected, all of them, with the peril that betided men; and the whole example of Christ was a silent testimony to the reality of that fear which brooded like dark thunderclouds over the whole wide horizon of the future.

This was the undertone which ran through the whole of Christ’s teaching, both public and private. He inculcated morality and manhood; but there was something beyond this. There was an invisible world. There were inexpressible perils. He, and after Him His apostles, labored as they that would snatch men as brands from the burning.

Now, I have felt every difficulty that any man has ever felt. In my thought I walk around about the terrific fact of the future. I, too, take into account the Fatherhood of God, and I look upon the unpitied nations of the globe, and with inexpressible longing and anguish, for which there is no word, I have sought relief. But there is the

plain, simple testimony of Jesus Christ. I cannot get around that, nor get over it. There it is. I have nothing to say. I cannot fathom the matter. A child can ask me questions that I cannot answer. I find my soul aching. As it were drops of blood flow for tears. But, after all, I do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I do not believe He would deceive me nor deceive you. And if you ask me for the reason of the faith that is in me, I simply say this, "Jesus says so"—that is all. And I cannot give up His testimony. I preach the love of God, and I do not know what the scope of that love is. I do not know where it would logically lead. But I am sure that I am right in preaching that all punitive elements are under the control of love. I am perfectly sure that love will bring everything right in the end. I therefore preach without qualification, and almost without limitation on that side. But I am not to be understood, on that account, as not believing what Christ Himself deliberately says in respect to the peril of sin, or in regard to punishment in the life which is to come. When I doubt the doctrine, therefore, it will be because I doubt the divinity of Christ. As long as I hold to the divinity of Christ, I cannot but hold the truth which He taught me to believe and to teach to others—that sin will be visited in the other life with terrible penalties, such as no man's imagination can pierce. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

It goes to my heart to say these things. This is not the side that I seem to myself called to preach. Yet it is there, and if I am faithful to my whole duty I must preach it. As a surgeon does things that are most uncongenial to himself, so sometimes I do. And I do this with tears and with sorrow. It makes me sick.

I remark, in review, then, that while we are to be utterly tolerant of those who have adopted other theories; while we are neither to disown them as Christians, nor to discipline them, for believing as they do—the day has gone by when a man is to be disciplined for his honest belief; if men cannot be cured in the open court of reasoning, they cannot be cured at all, and we are not their masters to punish them—while we are to acknowledge every man's right in this respect, and treat with kindness and fair-mindedness those that take grounds different from our own, yet let me say that any theory which takes off the pressure of responsibility that rests upon every man, that removes from any man's conscience the burden that Christianity puts there, or lessens his feeling of the awfulness of sin, is unchristlike and dangerous. Christ placed the burden of fear on unrepentant men's consciences; and any one who takes off that burden of fear, is not Christ-like.

I say, once more, that any theory is permissible that still puts before a man all the motives and spurs of hope and of fear as they are

combined in the truth of heaven and hell; and that any modifications of views hitherto held, are permissible if they do not break the force of responsibility. If you break that, you break the great element of moral government. The sense of obligation to right, and the fear of doing wrong should be maintained. Variations in philosophy may be permissible, but we must have the substance of Christ's teaching, which is, that it is damnable to sin, that it is dangerous to die in sin, and that the future is full of peril to wicked men; while the life to come is full of blessedness to the righteous.

This leads me, lastly, to speak of the uses which we are to make of this truth. It seems to me that instead of dividing ourselves up into pugnacious sects, instead of separating ourselves into contending schools, on this matter, we should constantly have before our minds these most solemn testimonies of Christ in his teaching throughout the Gospel, and that they should keep alive and sharp in every one of us the reality of right and wrong. We ought not to allow the distinction between good and evil to be fused, run together, or to be slurred over. All the world is filled with illusions; and there is nothing that men are in more danger of losing than clear, sharp notions of honor, and truth, and rectitude, and responsibility. And this teaching of Christ brings the whole pressure of the eternal world to bear on the conscience in such a way as to keep it alert, sensitive, and true. It should keep alive in us a sense of our own eternal being. We never live only for the day; and yet we do live by the day. But, in the sense of formative power, the feelings that throb and swell in you to-day are master-masons, and with their little trowels they are building, building, building, in your thoughts and impulses; and they never leave you as they found you. You are changing from hour to hour; and that which is building is building for eternity. For our life does not consist in the days that we are spending on earth. Our life runs forward endlessly. And though we do not see what is being done within, the work goes on without cessation.

The man who sits at the end of the magnetic line works at his little telegraphic machine, but sees no writing. The message is rendered a hundred miles away. We are living here, and all our acts are performed here; but the record and the portraiture, the character and the destiny report themselves far beyond.

This doctrine of the Future makes life most solemn, and brings motives for fidelity and for activity which we cannot gather within the horizon of time. It ought to inspire earnestness and watchfulness and great endurance and great industry, in those who are seeking to save themselves.

We are many of us as men who have been cast away upon the sea,

and are upon rafts, trying to reach the shore. We are as men that are sick, and are, by watchfulness, and by care, and by skill, striving to regain their health. We should live, not as men who are well, but as men that need a physician.

We ought especially to be incited to fidelity to our children. By as much as you fear and dread this great truth of the punishment of sin hereafter, by so much you must be faithful to your children from the cradle upward, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is not safe for them to sin. It is not safe for them to be selfish. It is not safe for them to be proud. It is not safe for them to be sensuously prosperous, sacrificing every virtue that they may be prosperous in this world. You are bringing them up for the kingdom of God. Woe be to that mother and to that father who stand in the judgment day at last, and hear their child say, "But for you I had not perished!"

No man can enter into the kingdom of God without strife. No virtue can be wrought out without strife. Our virtues are like crystals hidden in rocks. No man shall find them by any soft ways, but by the hammer and by fire. If there is anything that is to endure the fear of death, and the strifes of the eternal world, it is that to which we come by suffering. And we are to account nothing too heavy, nothing too sharp, nothing too long, in this life that shall bring us, at last, crowned and robed and sceptered, into the presence of our own God to be participators of his immortality.

Men and brethren, we are standing on the verge of the unseen world. All the thunderous din of this life ought not to fill our ears so but that we can hear the Spirit and the Bride that say to every man, through this golden air to-day, "Come! come!" And that lonely and solemn sound, like that of the surf beating on the shore from the broad Atlantic, that all day and all night sounds on, and is never still—that sound comes from the other world, and says to us, "Beware, beware of that punishment of sin which overhangs the other and the under life forever and forever!"

May God bring us through brightness to gladness, and through gladness to joy, and through joy to immortality and blessedness. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O God, before thee can all flesh come, with all their wants, to ask supply; with all their infirmities, to receive strength; and before thee shall all come to render their dread account, when thou shalt judge the quick and the dead. And we, too, shall come; and secret things shall be made known, and hidden things plain, before God; and we shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. We desire to live looking forward to that adjudication; to the equity of God. We desire to remember that thy love is full of justice, and that love itself must be just. We desire to believe in thee as paternal, and as administering in heaven in love, and upon earth; and yet that it is not the nature or possibility of love to bear and clear the guilty; and that thou dost love purity, and that those whom thou lovest must be pure, and true, and good. And though it is hard for us to rise into the possession of holiness; it is not hard for those to be holy in whom thy spirit works, both to will and to do of the good pleasure of God. Thou art not standing aloof to command. Thou art in every one of us, working in us, inspiring us, brooding over us, speaking by the world outside, speaking by thy providence, speaking by the Holy Ghost, in tones that the heart knows, though the ear may not hear. And thou dost love us, and art our faithful Friend, our Teacher, our Guide. Unless our pride is obdurate, and our hearts are as stone, thou wilt surely win us from all sin, and thou wilt prepare us for thine own dear kingdom of peace and joying; convey us through the darkness and through the unknown portal of death, and through the airy way, home, with joy unto our Father's house.

And now we desire, O Lord our God, to renew our thanks for the revelation of this knowledge. By thy truth thou hast cleansed the heaven of our fears, that went vagrant every whither to search for spirits and demons and all sprites of mischief and of evil. There are none, or they are beneath thy government; and thou dost control them. Thou hast delivered us from the fear of all those unknown causes that terrified the ignorant in days gone by. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. All laws, and all processes—the mightiest, are still beneath thy sway. Thou sayest, Go; and they go. Thou sayest, Stay; and they obey thy bidding.

Now we desire, Lord, since thou art for us, to fear none who shall be against us—to walk in the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, and the love of God, which is the end thereof. And we pray that thou wilt vouchsafe to us every day, the sense of thy presence. Give us the monition of thy Spirit. Give us the secret communion of thy heart, that hidden love, which is incommunicable, and yet blessed in so many. Grant unto us, we pray thee, that peace which passeth all understanding—that peace in which fear cannot live—that peace which is the cure of care—that peace which takes from love its anxieties, and from bereavement its anguish, and from desolateness all its loneliness. Grant that each one may have resting upon him, that peace which shall be as the sunlight over all the earth, bringing beauty, bringing life, and bringing gladness.

We pray that thou wilt fulfill all thy promises to thy people. Teach them more and more to trust God, and to walk by faith, and not by sight. Teach us while we are enjoying the abundance of thy providence, and are in a large place, and are prospered, not to become selfish and to lose sympathy for others. May we remember Him who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty might become rich. Grant that we may have his spirit in us.

And we pray that thou wilt bless us in our households, and sanctify our intercourse one with another, and exalt our affections. Grant that our daily life may savor of heaven, and that the perfumes of the Celestial Garden may be upon our raiment, as upon those who have walked therein.

O Lord, bless to-day those who have gathered together in thy presence in this sanctuary,—those who are unknown to us, but known to

thee—strangers among strangers. If their hearts are with thine, they are with ours. They are our brethren. May they feel it. May they rejoice in the service of the sanctuary, and take home the truth as God's message—their God's, and our God's. And we pray that this sacred bond of union in Jesus Christ, may interpret man to man, all the world over. We pray that thou wilt bless all those in thy presence who need thee to quicken them against temptation; to give them songs in the night; to give them light in darkness. May there be those in thy presence who now shall discharge trouble, and cast their care upon the Lord, and witness to the faithfulness with which his promises are kept to them.

Grant, we pray thee, that those who are dull of heart may be stirred up to-day. May we all take lessons of instruction out of thy Word. And we pray that it may breathe more earnestness upon our lives, and moral solemnity upon our sense of duty. And may we do with our might what our hands find to do; knowing that the night cometh when no man can work.

And grant thy blessing to rest upon all the churches that are open to-day, and upon thy dear servants that preach the Gospel. Preach to them, that they may preach to the people. Spread abroad the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, in every part of our land. Turn back infidelity, and all immorality, and Sabbath-breaking, and profanity, and avarice, and greediness, and violence, and misrule, and corruption of every name.

Sanctify this great nation, and make it a people of God. We pray for the nations of the earth—for those that are in darkness, that the light promised may arise speedily upon them. We pray for those that are struggling in the midst of ignorance and superstition, among whom burn the taper lights of the Gospel. Oh, kindle them more and more until they shall glow like the morning upon the mountains.

We pray for those nations that are engaged in war. Will the Lord speedily make known his own counsel, and fulfill that which he hath purposed of mercy—for we believe thou art ploughing that thou mayest sow. And though there is blood in the furrow, there shall yet be peace; and over all the distracted land there shall be yet better law, better knowledge, better men. But may nations learn peace through love and through justice.

And we pray that intelligence may make the common people wise, that they may not be led hither and thither as sheep to the slaughter. We pray that truth may prevail, and that all the nations of the earth may learn that they are men, not beasts. May the Spirit of the Lord go forth; and may that kindling light, which so long hath shown dimly in prophecy, burst forth. And little by little may the morning gather and pour abroad over all the earth, until the welcome shout from above shall tell us that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly; for the whole earth doth wait for thee, and long, and groan, and travail in pain.

And the glory shall be to the Father, and the Son and the Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee, that thou wilt bless the word of truth which has been spoken; grant that it may do good to every one that has heard it. Make us honest. Make us earnest. Make us solemn. Make us active. Inspire us to do thy will. And let us not be found wanting when thou shalt come at last and gather thine own, and flame forth in the glory of thy Father's kingdom, with all thine angels about thee. Then may our father be there, and our mother be there, and our brothers be there, and our sisters be there, and our children be there; and may we all be there to see them all. When we shall have looked enough upon thee—thou that then

wilt be Chief among ten thousand—may we find also that we have brought up there from earth those that shall keep company with us in the heavenly land.

And we will give the praise . . . Father, the Son and the Spirit.
Amen.

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
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